

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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LB 972

funds checks in six months. You have all received a packet from Health and Human Services with background information about LB 972, including the federal requirements and the division's response to the UN Public Policy Center recommendations regarding customer service. I hope that our debate on LB 972 will give us the opportunity to reflect on how, in working with the federal government and the administration, we have been able to increase substantially child support collection in the state of Nebraska. That is the goal. That is what we should all be concerned about. And our partnership with the federal government has proven to be very successful and having a good working relationship with the federal government has certainly helped us in their being willing to work with us around some of the issues that we have with our computer system. There are some issues that I am sure will surface again--the fact that it is a mandate and is therefore evil. But I will have to...I have to say that if you look at the way we have increased collections of child support, if it is evil, the only evil that it has been that the federal government has worked in partnership with us, has been to increase the support that goes to children. We do have problems with the system, we know that. We know that there are things that need to be done to address some of those problems, but I don't believe that the fact that there are problems should prevent us from moving forward in those ways that we need to move forward. There is still the issue about people wanting to have that face time, that personal aspect that we have had in our current system with our clerks of the court. Hopefully, by having an effective automated system, it will be so much better for the children of Nebraska that that aspect of the face time will not be so significant. I do think we should pass LB 972. I do think that we should do it because of the children. Children are the recipients of court ordered support, and they deserve to have this financial transaction managed in the same way that we expect that our personal and business transactions be managed, using the best business practices and technology that's available, and that's what the SDU is about and that's what LB 972 is about, and that's what I believe the Treasurer intends to do in the work that he's going to put into the SDU. The National Conference of State Legislatures reports that legislators around the country hear more about child support payments than any single issue, even including taxes. A quick review of the testimony and debate on the bills that we've